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Phillipps-Wolley, Clive, 1854-1918
An address delivered ... on behalf
of the Victoria-Esquimalt Branch.
[Victoria 1907]

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AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

CLIVE PHILLIPPS-WOLLEY 1854

ON BEHALF OF THE

VICTORIA-ESQUIMALT BRANCH
British Columbia

of the NAVY LEAGUE

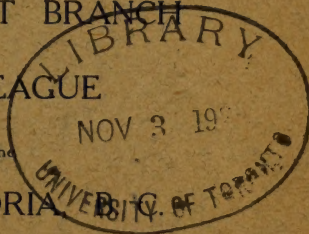
To an Audience in the

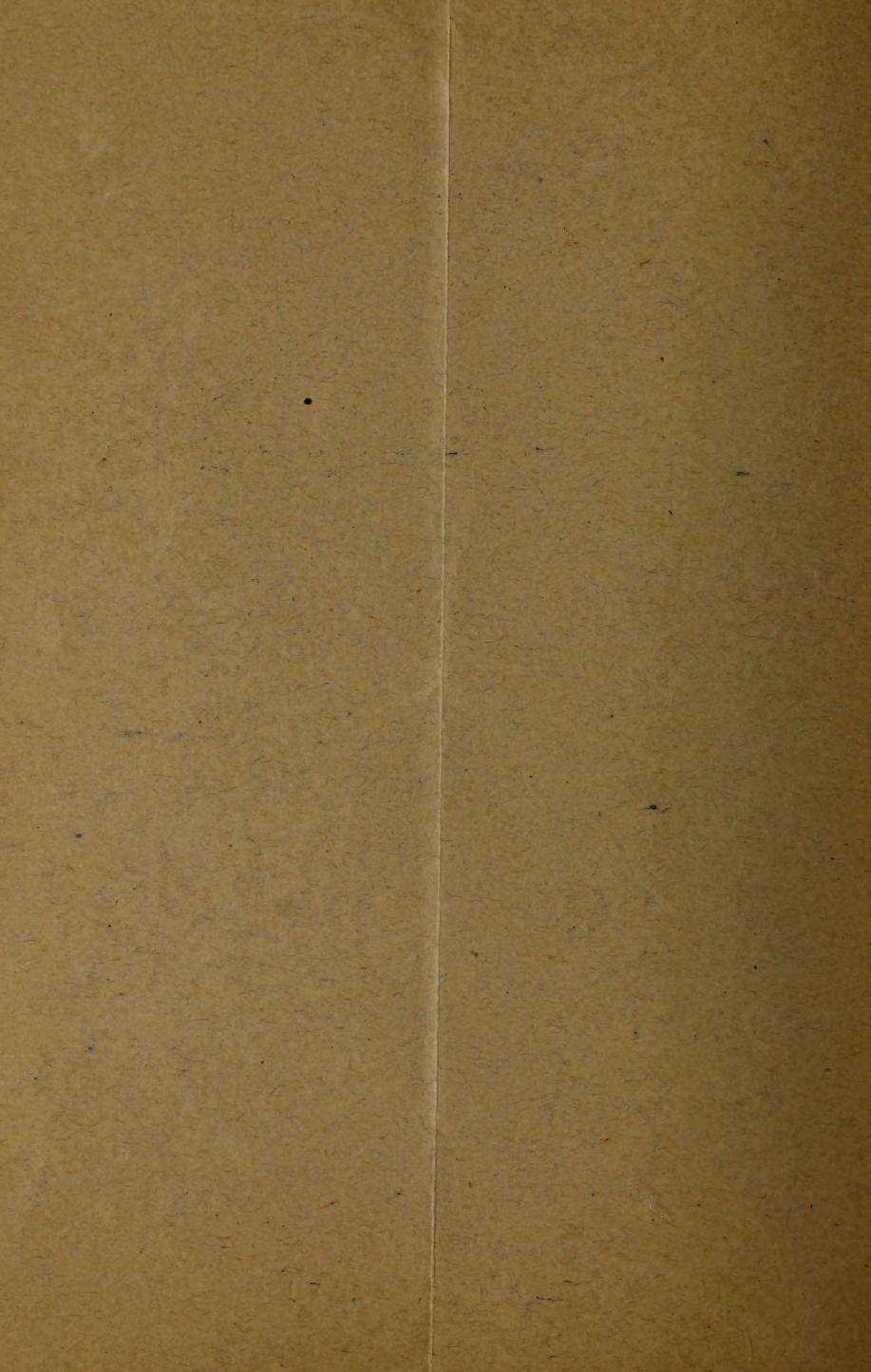
CITY HALL, VICTORIA

TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1907

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF VICTORIA
IN THE CHAIR

Printed by order of the League





An Address delivered by Clive Phillipps-Wolley on behalf of the Victoria-Esquimalt branch of the Navy League, to an audience in the City Hall, Victoria, B. C., on Tuesday, May 14th, 1907.

The Speaker said :

I am glad to see that our appeal has in Greater Britain as in Great Britain reached our women as well as our men; that they have realized that this question which we are to discuss, affects the homes of the Empire, and that the mothers and sweethearts of the nation have not forgotten that the deeds which have made Britain great, and kept her safe, though done primarily for the Mother Country, were done largely for the love of British women.

The sailor's wife the sailor's star has been, since England was first Merrie England.

I claim, that with only one exception, the Religion of Britain, the subject I am asked to address you upon, is the most important of all subjects affecting the well being of our Empire, and with that it is indissolubly connected.

The existence of the Empire depends upon the Navy, and the proudest boast, and in God's eye I believe the one reason for the maintenance of that Empire, has been that the Mother Country has been always Defensor Fidei, the Champion of Christianity, and the example, not always perfect I admit, of that moral code, which has been the salvation of humanity. Britain's greatness and success are due to the expansion of her naval power, and to the consequent spread of her colonial system, and that self-denying obedience to duty which made her sailors such *men*; that justice which alone held and holds India for her; which keeps the balance fairly between her rich and her poor; which taught your Hudson Bay Company to rule the Indians of this North West by the "white man's word" more securely than the States can rule them by the sword, are all the direct

outcome of that Creed which Christ taught, and for which your Mother Country stands.

So I read history, and so reading it, hope for God's aid in my poor attempt to bring home to you your duty as Britons.

And now Ladies and Gentlemen, let us make our foundation sure.

What are you?

Some of you will answer Canadians, some English, Scotch, Irish, or Welsh. To my mind all are wrong.

If you call yourselves Canadians, you limit yourselves to a union with only 6,000,000 people, having an indefensible land frontier, nearly 4,000 miles in length, with a vast sea front, having no navy to defend it. You have but the smallest of armies, and a history of three or four hundred years, full of promise, and boasting some great pages, of which perhaps the most glorious are those which record your pioneer work for your fellow men, and the U. E. Loyalists sacrifice for the dear old flag.

If you call yourselves English, you claim union with a people thirty-three million strong (I speak only in round numbers, and with a rough approach to accuracy): you claim a share in a history which has no parallel in the world's records: you claim as your own a little army, which in spite of its mistakes has always gone at its fences in fearless fashion, and blundered out on the right side of the "bullfinch", and a navy which is admittedly mistress of all seas, but you limit yourselves to a nation with no room for expansion within her own bounds, and to one admittedly unable to feed itself.

Nay! Call yourselves British, and then indeed hold up your heads, for as such you have no peers under Heaven. As such, you belong to a nation nearly 400,000,000 strong.

The greatest history of the world is yours: most of that which is worth having in the world is yours: all seas, the world's highways, are yours: the world makers were your fathers; the world's pioneers are your brothers: the past was yours, and the future shall be yours.

If you would feed the world, you can do so with England's manufactures, Canada's corn, and beef, Australia's wool and mutton, India's tea, the sugar of the Indies. If you would

starve it, you could almost do so, by closing your sea gates, and shutting off supplies, but Britain is better known as the Mistress of the Open Gate than the keeper of a closed door.

Let us agree then on my first point, that we be British, now and always: members of that Empire, which England and her wandering children have built and sincere believers in that Imperial Idea, begotten sometime in the last century, baptized in the blood of colonies which died at Paardeburg, died to rise again as sister nations of one Empire, and confirmed as members of one indivisible whole when the Duke and Duchess of York stood sponsors for them in 1901, at every outpost of Empire.

As nations we have won us the rights of men, and shall hold them, but what man ever lived who was not proud of his mother? Proud of ourselves we have a right to be, but prouder than all of the mother of us all, the Heart of us all, dear liberty-loving, Queen-Mother England.

Let us see now, what made us what we are: where got we our wealth, and how have we held it?

It is always to the sea we must look, and to the long ships in which we went down to her.

Sea wolves were we at first, finding safety and wealth where others found death and disaster; sea kings later, the sea our path to Empire; sea traders then, and adventurers, and as the world grew duller, and more commercial, the great carriers of the Atlantic.

Sea carrying was our business, and I tell you British Columbians, that though the politicians of our day talk nothing of it, that that trade of sea carrying, is the business of your future, the only trade in which lies for you, a future such as fits the ambition of the most ambitious race on earth, the British men of the West.

The ledger may do for other trading firms, let me have here The World's Map: that is our Empire's ledger.

One of our national auditors Sir Vincent Howard, went over it the other day, and this is what he found in it. He found that steam being the motive power of men of war, and steam dependent upon coal, and the coaling stations in the hands of Britain, the sea ways of the world are ours. He illustrates the position thus.

If a German from the Baltic, or a Frenchman from the Channel wants to visit China, he must needs coal at Gibraltar by your leave, he must coal at Port Said, by your leave, at Aden by your leave at Colombo by your leave, at Singapore, by your leave, at Hong Kong by your leave, whilst whether he returns by the Cape of Good Hope, or by Cape Horn, he is just as much at your mercy.

A man of war cannot steam for more than 3,000 miles at speed, without recoaling, and foreign ships cannot recoal without your permission.

Neither can they repair without coming to your ocean repair shops: they cannot enter or leave the Mediterranean unless Britain sets the Atlantic gate open: they cannot enter or leave the Red Sea unless you give them leave, or the China Sea unless your Britain at Singapore and Hong Kong says "pass friend".

Gates, guns, motive power, are yours, the world's ocean ways are yours; and I am asking you such a fool's question, that I blush to ask it, "Don't you think this is worth paying for?"

There are some in Canada apparently who do not, but they are politicians, and perhaps England does not understand, that our politicians are to us in some things, as a monkey to an organ grinder, kept to amuse us, but not allowed to interfere with the music, when the tune we play is "Home sweet Home," or "Britain rules the waves."

* * * * *

Now Gentlemen I come to the commercial side of the matter, and again I ask you a question.

Will you be gamblers, or parasites, or wise and honest men?

You have made, and are making, enormous wealth, but you have not forged for yourselves a weapon to defend it. You have in front of you, the greatest trade prize of the world, the carrying trade of the Pacific, and you have not paid for a ship with which to compete for it. Upon the seas of the world I read that you have annually \$200,000,000 worth of property, and you have not paid a cent to insure it.

This surely is to be gamblers, since you cannot rely upon always having honest neighbours.

If you will not be gamblers, then will you be parasites? You hate the word colonial, and to my mind justly, because it implies the inferiority of dependants, and you would be members of a free nation, the peers of any born of woman.

But if you depend upon the navy of England, without paying towards its maintenance, in men or ships, or money, then to the degree in which you depend upon that navy, you are colonists or parasites of the mother country. You cannot be partners, unless you share the loss as well as the profits.

If you depend upon the Monro doctrine, and the ships of President Roosevelt (good man though he is) to which you contribute nothing, then instead of being colonists of Britain, you become parasites of the States.

I dare not speak of the man who suggested this to British Canadians, because here, we are not politicians, neither Liberal nor Conservative, and besides, I am only a rough man, and in my anger, my speech even in the presence of ladies, might betray me.

If you would neither be gamblers nor parasites, of the mother country, or of a foreign power, you must be wise and honest men; must pay for the insurance of your goods; contribute towards the policing of the seas, by contributing to the Imperial navy, either in men, or ships, or money.

A sister nation (Australia) has done so, and in a speech delivered to the Canadian Club at Ottawa, Mr. Frank Hodgins, K. C., suggested as our contribution, the creation of a fleet of eight cruisers, to cost \$5,000,000 apiece, to be built in the next sixteen years, to be manned at first by English sailors, and English officers.

That is a good enough suggestion, although I would remind my hearers that the existing British navy has not a few Canadian men and officers in it, but the manner of our contribution will not matter much, so long as we make up our minds to contribute. I have not yet heard of the obstacle which could stop western men when once they had made up their minds to "get there".

Now let us see what are the obstacles in the way of contribution to the Imperial navy; the reasons alleged by our opponents against this sane and honest measure.

I have nine of them here, set out in, but not endorsed by, the Canadian Annual review.

The first is (1) the theory of no taxation without representation. But gentlemen, if that is a sound theory, the converse of it should also be true, "no representation without taxation", and we are represented and protected by the British Navy, and we don't pay a cent for it. Besides, why should we not be represented in our own navy?

It is essential that the supreme command of any organ of war should be vested in one chief, but the Admiral of Britain's navy has been supposed to be the best man in it. Why should he not be a Canadian? There are at least two men in your own town, who in their dreams believe that that man may be their own boy.

The second (2) objection is as weak as the first, a theory that we need all our resources for internal developments.

But, apart from the fact that it is useless to develop unless we are developing for ourselves, and can protect our developments, this is untrue, since we have had a surplus of over \$7,000,000 p. a. for the last ten years, and we are promised a surplus of \$16,000,000 this year! Can a man spend his surplus better than in insuring the sources of his income?

The third (3) objection is that we need local squadrons for coast defence.

Certainly, and why should not our contribution be just such squadrons, always be it understood under the supreme control in time of Imperial need of the head of that Imperial navy as a part of which, such squadrons would be invaluable, though as independent unaided fleets, they would be valueless.

The fourth (4) objection is, that there is an impression abroad of the departmental inefficiency of the United Kingdom, derived from contemplation of the South African war.

This sounds like an impertinence at first, for if the Queen of the Seas does not know how to manage her navy, who does, and who is competent to criticize? But it is not really impertinent. It is only intensely British. It is the fashion of British people to let talkers rule them, when there is nothing particular to be done, but to keep an eye on them, and see that they do not get into mischief, and that is the business of the Navy League. When there is work to be done, we send our specialists to do it, meanwhile the British

people, acting through such societies as this, make clear to the departments in what way they want their business done, and how much they are prepared to spend upon it.

The fifth (5) objection is, that we are safe under the Munro doctrine. Did you ever hear of any industry which Uncle Sam promoted for another fellow's profit? If he works for you, he will want full wage for his work and you had better consider what that wage must be.

The sixth (6) is the real objection, the attitude of the French Canadians who, because they are solid, whilst the English Canadians are divided by imaginary party lines, contrive to control the Dominion.

This is a dangerous matter for one who seeks election to the Commons to touch upon, but I do so, because the only value of success to me, would be the opportunity it would afford of speaking the truth for my country where it could be heard.

I believe the truth to be, that the best of the French Canadians, like our late Governor, have given their hearts and their sons to our service, but there is a French sentiment hostile to closer union with Britain, and it is the duty of every Briton of whatever stripe in politics to unite in removing this obstacle, and in teaching all our people that this Dominion is in great things, neither Liberal nor Conservative, neither French nor English, but British.

It is said that Government by party can only be a success when you have a strongly defined line of cleavage. At present we have little or none. The conservatives allege that the liberals have adopted the conservative platform, and the liberals don't deny it. Why not unite, and split again upon a serious issue as Imperialists or Parasites?

The eighth (8) objection is that the British navy must in any case defend colonial sea-borne commerce. This is of course the parasites plea, but it must be remembered that if the British navy is to give protection to a non contributor, that non contributor cannot expect to call the tune, cannot for instance expect Great Britain to plunge into a ruinous war with the States, every time the States choose to infringe upon the rights of that non contributor.

Let me show you how this matter appears in the eyes of impartial witnesses.

The Agnes Donahoe with Canadian crew was seized Nov. 10th, 1904 by the Venezuelan Government for alleged poaching. Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that she was seized for that offence, under the laws of Venezuela, tried by the tribunals of that country, and condemned according to its laws, and the immediate attention—(of his government which won't contribute to the British navy! oh no) of the British Government would be called to the subject."

A Canadian paper commenting on this, wrote: "Isn't that a beggarly attitude for Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Premier of a great part of the British Empire, to take! He refuses to contribute one cent from Canada to the Imperial Defence Fund, but runs howling for help, directly any Canadians get into trouble in a distant land, and desires the aid of the British army and navy."

This is the view which the world will take of a nation which will not provide for its own defence. Is it the view which proud young Canada would have the world take of her?

The ninth (9) reason against contribution is comparative want of funds.

Hear what your Finance Minister has to say about the \$16,000,000 surplus for this year, and hear alongside it what a young Canadian who holds the chair of political science at McGill university (long may he hold it) has to say on this plea of comparative want of funds:

"Now, in this month of April, when the ice is leaving our rivers, the Ministers of Canada, take ship for this the fourth Colonial Conference at London. What do they go to do? Nay, rather what shall we bid them do? We—the six million colonials sprawling our over-suckled infancy across a continent—what shall be our message to the Motherland? Shall we still whine of our poverty, still draw imaginary pictures of our thin herds shivering in the cold blasts of the North, their shepherds huddled for shelter in the log cabins of Montreal and Toronto? Shall we beg the good people of England to bear yet a little longer, for the poor peasants of their colony, the burden and heat of the day? Shall our Ministers rehearse this worn-out fiction of our 'acres of now,' and so sail home again, still untaxed, to the smug approval of the oblique politicians of Ottawa? Or, shall we

say to the people of England: "The time has come, we know and realise our country. We will be your colony no longer. Make us one with you in one Empire, Permanent and Indivisible."

The argument which has been put forward by Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper and others that Canada has done her share in building the C. P. Ry., etc., is better than any of the preceding nine.

She has done her share as a builder of the Empire to which she belongs, but she is not doing her share towards the preservation of that Empire, and when the great company in which she is such an important shareholder issues a call for insurance purposes, it is not worthy of her to refuse to honour that call.

It would be easy to show that leading Canadians on both sides in politics are in sympathy with the view which I take of the necessity for naval contribution, but I will not unnecessarily harrow your feelings by quoting the strong things they have said about that which the president of the Ontario Liberal Association called May 10, 1905, "a matter of severe and just censure," but instead I challenge you to produce if you can, one valid argument in defence of Canada's refusal to contribute to the Defence Fund of the Empire, one plausible excuse for not contributing, and if you cannot do that, I ask you to pass the resolution I am about to put to the meeting, and to aid me in every way in your power to impress upon the people who represent us that this question is not a party question but one upon which every Canadian (a few French only excepted) is agreed: to impress upon them, that we insist upon being sane and honest men, full partners in the greatest of Empires, and joint owners of the weapon which keeps the seas.

If any here think of the cost, let him think also of the prize.

I told you that the mother country made her fortune as the carrier of the Atlantic, and that you should make yours, as carriers of the Pacific. This is how that matter stands.

Two competitors stand, stripped and bent at the scratch, for a great race. Both have about the same distance to travel. The Pacific is the course, and the goal is that market of 400,000,000 men of the east, waiting for the goods

which white men produce, the manufactures of the east, and the wheat of the west. One is the Briton at Victoria and Vancouver, and the other the lean keen Yankee of Seattle.

Each has behind him, great ducts like the C. P. Ry. or any of the American lines to connect him with the sources of supply, and the hives of industry in the east, and each has the sea at his feet, and timber with which to build his ships all round him. The Yankee has some coal near by of inferior quality, whilst the Briton (you my friends) has an abundant supply of excellent coal, and undeveloped iron, side by side, and at the very sea's brim. He has poor coal, and no iron: you have few men, and no navy.

GET BOTH.

Let your mandate to your politicians be "Replace the bachelor rice eating Chinaman with breeding beef eating Britons from the old country, of whom we may get, sailors for our merchant ships, as well as help on our land, in return for an ample wage, and a chance to grow up in this incomparable young-man's-land, and buy us back our honour, and our right in the British navy.

"We were born free, and weaponed men, and we will not longer remain dependant and unarmed."

I have given you an argument for the Briton and for the trader, an especial argument for the British Columbian. Let me add one for the Christian.

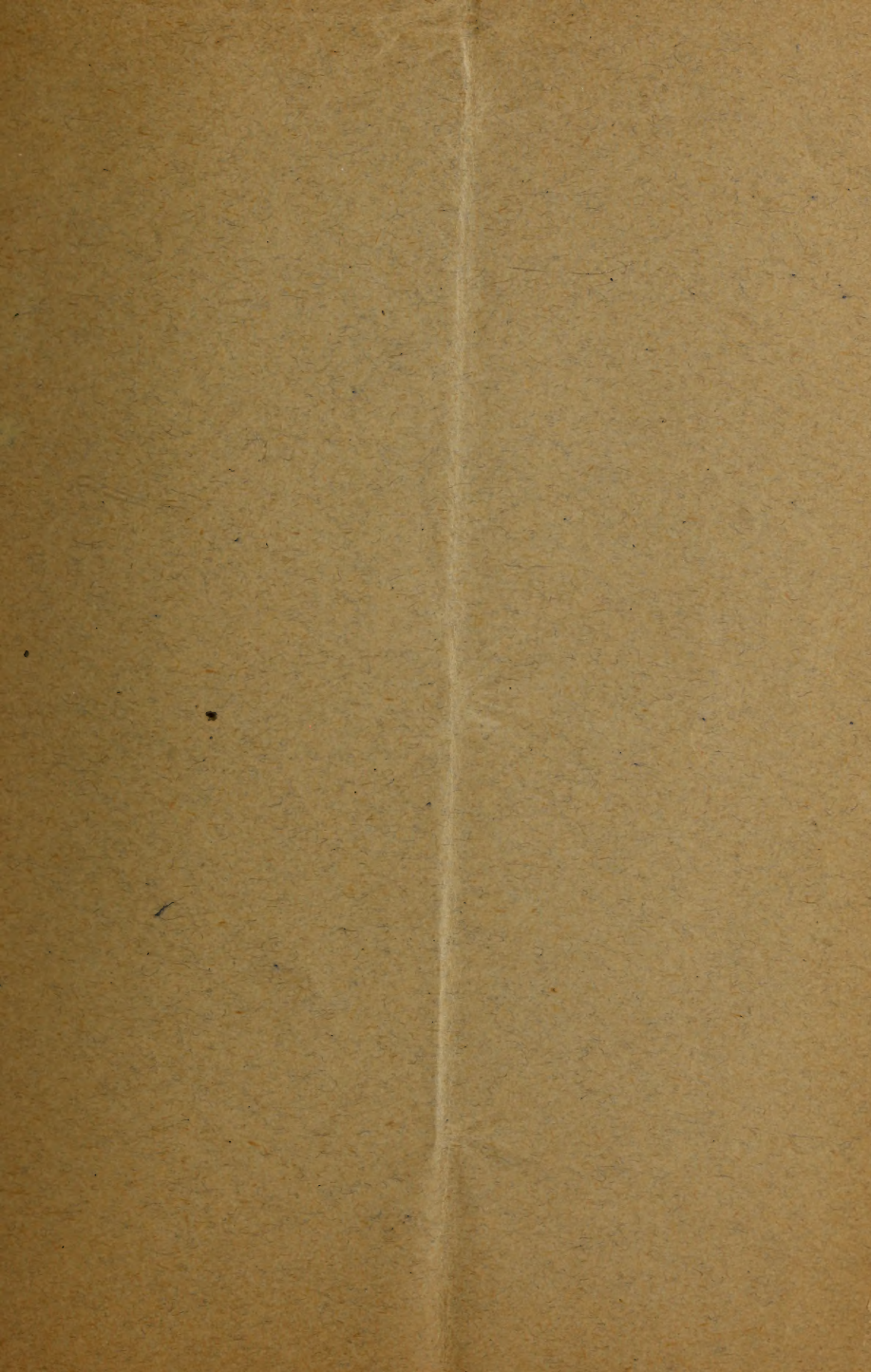
Though the British navy be the mightiest instrument of war, ever known on Earth, remember that its message to the nations as long as its power is unquestionable is "Peace be still"!

Mr. Phillipps-Wolley then moved the following resolution which was seconded by a well known representative of the Liberal party Capt. W. H. Langley.

"That it is the duty of the Navy League and of every patriotic Canadian independent of party, to press in every way for a substantial contribution to that Imperial navy, upon which the very existence of Canada as a portion of the Empire depends, and that this meeting believes that a plebiscite of the people of Canada (independent of party) would support this resolution."

The resolution was carried unanimously and with enthusiasm.





Constitution of the Navy League.

1. This Association shall be called "THE NAVY LEAGUE." Its purpose shall be to secure as the primary object of the National Policy, "The Command of the Sea."

2. The general aims of the Navy League shall be :

(a) To spread information, showing the vital importance to the British Empire of the Naval supremacy upon which depend its trade, empire and national existence.

(b) To call attention to the enormous demands which war would make upon the Navy, and to the fact that the Navy is not strong enough to meet them ; and at all times to point out any shortcomings in this respect.

(c) To call attention from time to time to such measures as may be requisite to secure adequate preparation for the maritime defence of the Empire.

(d) To urge these matters upon public men and, in particular, upon candidates for Parliament.

3. The League shall be absolutely distinct from all party politics.

4. All persons approving of its aims and contributing to its funds, \$2 00 per annum, are entitled to membership of the Victoria-Esquimalt Branch of The Navy League, and to a copy of the Navy League Journal monthly. If you really care for your Empire, contribute.

JOS. PEIRSON, *Hon. Secretary,*
38 Douglas St, Victoria, B.C.

